

# Cavendish Church of England Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	
Signed: Headteacher	
Date:	Autumn 2023
Date to be Reviewed:	Autumn 2025

### **Our Vision**

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

*Challenge, Creativity, Compassion: Create a pure heart in me – Psalm 51:10*

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Our School Vision Statement reflects this commitment as children and staff are taught to challenge inequality, prejudice, bullying and harm; to respond with compassion and sensitivity to individual need and to respect the rights of all individuals to be safe and nurtured within God's world.

We encourage children to respond creatively to internal and external challenges in life, with compassion for others, including consideration for creation and the planet itself. Thus we show how to live justly and with a pure heart, reflecting the teachings of Jesus and God's love within our school environment.

### **Intent**

At Cavendish Church of England Primary School we aim to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and we address the fundamental questions in life, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. We enable children to develop a broad and thorough knowledge of Christianity, and to develop knowledge and understanding of other world religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Children also explore issues within humanism, and respect for all. Our policy is to incorporate the main faiths of children in our school, supporting inclusion and celebrating diversity. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding.

Religious Education is seen as having equal standing as a core subject in our setting. In addition to a dedicated weekly RE lesson, the school provides a variety of specialist RE enrichment experiences across the year and through our cross-curricular links.

Our school is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School, and therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Suffolk, and is informed by the Church of England's "*Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education*" (2019). The content, teaching, learning and attainment of RE is considered as part of the schools SIAMS inspection and the SIAMS framework.

Religious Education contributes to the school's Christian character and teaching about Christianity, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and is supported by children's experiences of Collective Worship and our school vision statement. However, the school is deeply committed to promoting respect for all, and as such Religious Education provides a key component of children's opportunities to explore a wide range of beliefs, practices and celebrations to further promote diversity and extend cultural and spiritual understanding, including a study of non religious based views such as spirituality and humanism.

### **Implementation**

Teachers will encourage a positive and enthusiastic learning environment where children are all able to achieve. The RE curriculum is organised through the Emmanuel Project, which is informed by the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus "Where do I stand?", updated 2023. This title reflects the concept that all humans have viewpoints and lenses through which they see the world.

The curriculum arrangement and organisation through a series of direct questions requires all pupils to think deeply about different religions and worldviews, developing an understanding of the complexity and diversity of belief and practise which informs a range of responses to these issues. The discussion of "big" questions enables children to draw on previous knowledge and experience, to explain their own thinking and ideas and to provide an understanding of theological teachings which support established worldviews and practices.

Children consider each unit of work by employing three distinct disciplines:

- Theology – key beliefs and concepts including sources of authority religious teachings, texts, spiritual leaders, divine revelation
- Human and social sciences – a study of customs, celebrations, rituals and practices. How religious teachings are interpreted in moral, ethical and practical lifestyles.

- Philosophy – ultimate questions of truth, morality, purpose and meaning in life. How responses to questions change over time and across societies.

RE is taught across the three key stages (KS1, LKS2, UKS2). The curriculum builds on children's experiences in EYFS.

Teachers follow a two year rolling curriculum to enable all children to engage in all learning units.

The RE curriculum is implemented through:

- A weekly RE lesson to give the time needed for teaching Religious and faith based knowledge, developing key vocabulary and enabling time for personal response and reflection.
- Learning builds on prior knowledge from previous key stages and ensures children have opportunities to embed these skills and progress further in their knowledge, understanding and enquiry skills. (See progression maps)
- Frequent RE experiences that allow children to explore and apply the key skills and knowledge they have been taught.
- Reflection, linked to the school's vision statement is embedded into lessons to ensure these skills are being developed throughout children's school experiences.
- New vocabulary and challenging concepts are introduced through direct teaching. This is developed through the years, in-keeping with the topics areas within each faith study.
- Children are encouraged to ask their own questions and are given opportunities to use their skills and research to discover the answers through a variety of means.
- Teachers use precise questioning in class to check conceptual knowledge and skills and assess regularly to identify those children with gaps in their learning.
- Teachers find opportunities to develop children's understanding of their religious understanding by providing opportunities to explore a range of celebrations, festivals and practises across and within faiths.
- Religious opportunities are provided in Early Years through local visits to our church, discussions with our incumbent, and through cross-curricular links with Collective Worship and topic areas. Opportunities through PSED enable children to experience and apply Christian values in their daily lives, and to begin to identify similarities and differences between their own practices and those of others for key festivals and celebrations.
- Forest Schools allows children to apply reflective questioning, awe and wonder in a naturalistic setting.
- Specialist events enable children to share their learning amongst their peers and the local community, including the opportunity to engage with faith leaders and religious settings.
- Links with our Diocese support for schools through the Discovery Centre Team
- A rolling programme of visits so that by the end of Key Stage 2, all children will have been given the opportunity to visit a Church, Cathedral, Gurdwara, Mandir, Synagogue and Mosque.

### **Impact**

Through providing hands on, engaging RE curriculum for all children at Cavendish Church of England Primary School, children will be equipped with a foundation of knowledge and skills to support them through their continuing education and in the wider world.

The impact of the RE curriculum will be measured through:

- Mind maps at the beginning of a learning unit to assess children's prior knowledge
- Quizzes within a learning unit to assess children's key knowledge and vocabulary.
- Formative assessment against subject statements on one page profiles.
- Evaluating units against the Diocesan assessment outcomes.
- Opportunities for reflection to apply the unit learning to the school's vision statement
- Extended writing at KS2 to enable children to make connections within and across faiths (adaptations where appropriate)

- Children's responses to visual prompts and artefacts to apply key knowledge
- Children's self-assessment and reflection

Children will be able to apply their skills to wider curriculum areas and will have the knowledge and understanding required to transition to KS3.

### **Enrichment**

The school aims to provide children with a wide range of religious and spiritual enrichment opportunities both within school and during visits and trips. The school uses experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, Sukkot to develop religious thinking. This is supported by our rolling programme to visit a range of religious buildings and place of worship.

We organize visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to children. This enables children to explore diversity within a faith, such as Church of England and Baptist Church approaches, as well as comparing beliefs and values across faiths.

We seek to use celebrations to make RE teaching multi-sensory and immersive through the use of artefacts, food and visual supports.

### **Cultural capital**

Religious Education is an essential part of the school's Cultural Capital programme of experiences and opportunities. As a small school in a rural setting, we have a duty to actively promote children's awareness and experiences of events, beliefs, practices and celebrations. This enables children to make connections with national and global events, and to develop an understanding of and respect for a range of cultures and beliefs. Experience days such as Diwali, Sukkot, Wesak and Remembrance compliment and sit alongside our established programme of Christian celebrations and Festivals. Religious Education enables children to explore the ideology behind festivals and practices and so deepen their understanding and development of SMSC.

Our curriculum will ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn about famous individuals who have been led by faith, and the impact they have had on the world around us thus promoting diversity and inclusion. This is further extended through our support of charities, and exploring the role of giving in faith and religious belief.

RE teaching is further developed through conscious references and links to British Values and the school's vision statement.

All RE lessons will provide children the opportunities to be challenged, be creative and be compassionate to others and the world that surrounds them.

### **Inclusion**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum to all children regardless of ability or background. Lesson activities are differentiated to ensure all children are able to access their learning. Children with SEND are supported in a variety ways including; word mats, writing frames, visual aids, specific questioning, pictorial representations, adult support, peer support and support in using scientific equipment. To support the most able, teachers use different open ended questions and statements to allow for deeper thinking and application of scientific knowledge and skills at a mastery level.

All teaching staff are clear that when assessing learning in RE, that this is not in any way linked to children's skills in reading and writing. A wide range of assessment methods are used to ensure no child is disadvantaged in sharing their understanding.

### **Cross curricular links**

RE provides many opportunities for cross-curricular learning. The school aims to provide children with many religious and spiritual opportunities which are informed by core teaching in Religious Education.

Collective Worship in our school is rooted in Christian teachings, and supports understanding of both the Old and New Testament. RE helps children to understand the links between Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Within History lessons, children have opportunities to learn about significant religious figures from the past including religious leaders, as well as those whose actions were informed by personal faith (eg Lord Shaftsbury and Victorian reforms for children).

In Geography children develop their knowledge of locations important to faith and significant places of pilgrimage around the world, as well as understanding how faith transcends individual countries.

PSHE promotes the importance of British Values, living well together and healthy relationships which reflects religious teachings of respect, inclusion and diversity

In the arts children are taught how creativity can be an expression of, and a response to faith, including a wider spiritual response to creation.

Cooking and DT gives children the opportunity to use their skills in preparing and sharing food as ways in which religions develop communities together.

Science enables children to explore and develop an understanding of the world around them, as well as the awe and wonder of creation.

Forest school supports children's spiritual development, including an appreciation of non-faith based spirituality. Outdoor tools and materials are used to support religious understanding through creation stories, making artefacts such as crosses.

### **Withdrawal Clause**

It is very much hoped that this policy supports parent and carer understanding about RE education in our school. In all schools, parents and carers currently have the right in law to withdraw their children from RE lessons. This right does not extend to other areas of the curriculum where spontaneous questions may arise about religions or religious matters, or where spirituality, religious beliefs and values inform cross-curricular teaching.

Parents who wish to exercise this right should make an appointment with the head teacher via the school office. The meeting is not to seek to change viewpoint but to discuss the management and practical arrangements for withdrawal.